United Nations A/66/690

General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 February 2012

Original: English

Sixty-sixth session
Agenda item 63
New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

Letter dated 8 February 2012 from the Permanent Representatives of Benin and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to enclose herewith the "Final Communiqué of the Turkey-Africa Ministerial Review Conference", adopted in Istanbul on 16 December 2011 (see annex).

We request your kind assistance in circulating the present letter and the annex thereto as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 63.

(*Signed*) Jean-Francis Régis **Zinsou**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Benin
to the United Nations
Chair of the African Union

(*Signed*) Ertuğrul **Apakan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 8 February 2012 from the Permanent Representatives of Benin and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The First Ministerial Review Conference of the Africa-Turkey Partnership

Istanbul, 16 December 2011

Communiqué

1. The First Ministerial Review Conference of the Africa-Turkey Partnership was held in Istanbul on 16 December 2011, in line with the Follow-up Mechanism of the Istanbul Declaration on Africa-Turkey Partnership. The Conference was chaired by His Excellency Eustaquio Nseng Esono, Minister Delegate for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Francophonie of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, and His Excellency Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey.

2. The Conference was also attended by representatives of African countries and Turkey and by representatives of the African Union Commission and some regional economic communities. Observers from various international and regional organizations were also present at the Conference.

3. The Ministers welcomed the holding of the Ministerial Conference following the First Africa-Turkey Cooperation Summit, held in Istanbul in August 2008, which confirmed the commitment of Heads of State and Government to work towards strengthening the various dimensions of the strategic partnership launched in response to Turkey's opening-up policy with respect to Africa.

4. The Ministers considered the preparations for the next Africa-Turkey Summit, to be organized in an African country in 2013. They underlined the positive contribution of the First Africa-Turkey Cooperation Summit to the strengthening of the relations between the continent and Turkey and called on all partners to join their efforts for another successful summit.

5. The Conference reviewed the Joint Implementation Plan that had been adopted during the senior officials' meeting in Istanbul on 15 December 2010 and evaluated the progress made since the First Africa-Turkey Cooperation Summit. In this regard, the Conference took note of the comprehensive work carried out by both sides with their public and private institutions, and determined what could be achieved for further development and diversification of the cooperation between Africa and Turkey.

6. The Ministers reiterated their commitment to the Implementation Plan and, in this regard, considered identified priority projects for implementation. To this end, the Government of Turkey undertook to complete its consultation process as soon as possible in order for a meeting between the Subcommittee on Multilateral Cooperation and the Government of Turkey to be convened to review the status of implementation of the projects in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, by September 2012. In this regard, the Subcommittee on Multilateral Cooperation, the African Union Commission and the Turkish Embassy in Addis Ababa shall hold regular consultations.

7. The Ministers exchanged views on the ongoing interactions between the African continent as a whole, individual African countries as well as continental and regional organizations, and Turkey. They noted with satisfaction that these relations are developing with mutual trust and respect on the basis of equality. The Ministers commended the momentum rendered to their mutual relations by many high-level visits, and encouraged increasing contacts and consultations between public and private bodies as well as participation by Ministers from Africa and Turkey responsible for various areas in sectorial meetings.

8. The Ministers expressed the importance of organizing Turkish-African media forums in order to develop cooperation and communication among African and Turkish media representatives and organizations.

9. The Conference offered the opportunity to highlight the developing links between Africa and Turkey in the fields of intergovernmental cooperation, transportation, trade and investment, agriculture, health, infrastructure, energy, education, tourism, environment, media and technology, as well as peace and security.

10. The Ministers noted the reciprocal increase in the diplomatic representation between African countries and Turkey and its positive contribution to the enhancement of their relations within the Partnership, and encouraged further démarche in this respect.

11. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the fast and sustained growth in their economies and the resilience with which they have withstood the global financial and economic crisis. They welcomed the steady increase in the trade and investment relations between African countries and Turkey, and expressed their desire to further strengthen their economic and commercial cooperation for the benefit of their peoples and for sustainable development.

12. To this end, the Ministers recalled the initiative by the Government of Turkey to explore the possibilities, in line with the adopted Implementation Plan (2010-2014), of offering tariff concessions or duty-free privileges to African least developed countries, in accordance with its obligations arising from its customs union with the European Union as well as other international commitments.

13. The Ministers took note of the ongoing partnership activities and development assistance from Turkey to Africa in the areas of universal education, education and training grants, support for infrastructure, agriculture and health, as well as concessional loans to contribute to infrastructure and capacity-building. They expressed their appreciation for the efforts of the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency, through which Turkish assistance is channelled, and welcomed the establishment of its additional regional offices.

14. The Ministers underlined the important role of university scholarships in building mutual understanding and cooperation, and welcomed Turkey's pledge to explore possible ways and means of further increasing its overall scholarship allocation for African countries in the coming years.

15. The Ministers took note of the concrete steps that Turkey has been taking to facilitate its visa regime for the benefit of nationals of African countries, in accordance with its determination to strengthen and expand their cooperation

through human interaction. Similarly, progress made by African countries on this issue is also appreciated by Turkey.

16. The Ministers expressed their strong support for the Istanbul Joint Implementation Plan and the Istanbul Declaration, as well as the outcome documents of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, successfully hosted by Turkey in Istanbul in May 2011, and welcomed Turkey's active and constructive policy in this regard. They underlined their firm determination to effectively follow up on the realization of the commitments outlined in the said documents and to actively cooperate at the international level to comprehensively address the challenges faced by the least developed countries, a majority of which are in Africa.

17. The Ministers recognized the essential role played by the African Union and the regional economic communities in Turkey's relations with the continent. The Turkish side reaffirmed its willingness to enhance its cooperation with them and expressed its readiness to support joint projects to be carried out in Africa in different fields.

18. The Ministers emphasized their satisfaction with the level of cooperation and support between African countries and Turkey, based on their comprehensive dialogue and partnership, especially in the United Nations and various international organizations, and expressed their commitment to further develop this cooperation for the benefit of both sides.

19. The Ministers welcomed the bid of the city of Izmir, Turkey, to host the World Expo 2020 with the theme "New Routes to a Better World/Health for All", and acknowledged the importance of "health for all" for the African countries.

20. The Ministers considered various issues affecting regional peace, security and prosperity, and called for further cooperation aimed at addressing these issues. They welcomed continuing political, social and economic transformation in their regions aimed at enhancing universal political, social and economic values. They reiterated their commitment to plural democracy, human rights, good governance, the pursuit of social justice, the eradication of hunger and poverty, the protection of the environment and respect for international law as the guiding principles that govern their relations.

21. The Ministers reiterated their firm support for the prevention and combating of terrorism, drug trafficking, migrant smuggling, human trafficking, illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, money-laundering and piracy, which seriously threaten the peace and security of the countries. In this respect, they strongly condemned the acts of piracy which continue to be a serious threat to international maritime safety, particularly in the Horn of Africa, the Indian Ocean region and the Gulf of Guinea, and expressed their firm support for ongoing multinational counterpiracy operations. They stressed the importance of sustainable economic growth in these regions as a means to tackle the underlying causes of piracy.

22. The Ministers considered terrorism as a common threat to all nations and expressed their strong determination to jointly combat this scourge in all its forms and manifestations. Turkey reaffirmed its commitment to support such efforts, which will contribute to sustainable peace and security in Africa.

23. The Ministers commended Turkey for its contribution to United Nations peace and stability missions, and particularly its commitment to help Somalia build peace, security and development. They also commended the contribution of the African countries, including through the Peace and Security Council, in resolving conflicts in Africa, and called for further collaboration between the two sides.

24. The Ministers expressed their support for the Transitional Federal Government and the implementation of the road map to end the transition period in Somalia. They also underlined the importance of the gains made on the ground by the forces of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), in particular the improvement of security conditions in Mogadishu. They called upon the international community to extend further support to AMISOM. They reiterated their appreciation to the troop-contributing countries, especially Burundi and Uganda, for their unwavering commitment to peace and security in Somalia.

25. The Ministers also welcomed the significant contribution of Kenya to the Transitional Federal Government-led effort aimed at further stabilizing Somalia to ensure its political unity and the welfare of the people of Somalia, and expressed their appreciation for the integration of a Kenya Defence Force contingent to AMISOM as well as for the support provided by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the Transitional Federal Government and AMISOM.

26. The Ministers commended the Republic of South Africa for the successful holding of the Seventeenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Durban, South Africa, in addressing the challenges posed by climate change.

27. The Ministers welcomed the Republic of South Sudan as a new member of the Africa-Turkey Partnership.

28. The Ministers expressed their welcome for Libya to reoccupy its seat in the African Union in its new era, and they welcomed the formation of a new transitional government in Libya. They expressed their willingness to support this government with all means to pave the way to formulate a new constitution and to conduct the presidential and general elections that shall lead to a democratic transition in the country.

29. The African Ministers, heads of delegations and representatives expressed their sincere thanks and gratitude to their Turkish counterparts and the people of Turkey for the warm hospitality that they had received. They also expressed their appreciation as regards the excellent working conditions provided for visiting delegations and the constructive results of the Conference.